

DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Blotter: May 20-26

Reminder for the week: Crabbers should review regulations before placing pots

DOVER – To achieve public compliance with laws and regulations through education and enforcement actions that help conserve Delaware's fish and wildlife resources and ensure safe boating and public safety, DNREC's Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers between May 20-26 made 3,888 contacts with anglers, boaters, and the general public, issuing 110 citations. Officers responded to 157 complaints regarding possible violations of laws and regulations or requests to assist the public. A Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police presence continued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area and Michael N. Castle Trail.

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Actions

- On May 24, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers arrested Mary M. Cain, 38, of Houston, for one count each of trespassing after hours on a state wildlife area, possession of drug paraphernalia not marijuana related, possession of marijuana – civil, possession of heroin, and two counts of possession of an opium or derivative at Coursey Pond near Felton. Cain was arraigned at Kent County Justice of the Peace Court 7 and released on her own recognizance pending a future court date.

Citations issued by category, with the number of charges in parentheses, included:

Fisheries Conservation: Possession of undersized blue crabs (10), possession of sponge crabs (2), no Fisherman Information Network (FIN) number (22), unlicensed fishing (9), and possession of undersized white perch (1).

Boating & Boating Safety: No life jacket on a child age 12 or younger as required by law (8)*, operating a vessel with insufficient number of life jackets (5), operating a personal watercraft without required life jackets (6), no throwable life preserver aboard as required for vessels 16 feet long or longer (1)*, operating an unregistered vessel (1), operating a vessel without a vessel registration card in possession (3), no boating safety certificate (5), allowing use of non-compliant vessel (3), no navigation lights (2)*, and operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol (1).

Public Safety: Possession of drug paraphernalia not marijuana related (1), possession of marijuana – civil (1), possession of heroin (1), and possession of an opium or derivative (2).

Other: Operating a motor vehicle off an established roadway on a state wildlife area (1)*, trespassing after hours on a state wildlife area (23)*, and parking violation – no stopping, standing, or parking (2).

**Includes citation(s) issued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area.*

DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes and thanks the majority of anglers, hunters, and boaters who comply with and support Delaware's fishing, hunting, and boating laws and regulations. Citizens are encouraged to report fish, wildlife, and boating violations to the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police by calling 302-739-4580 or through the DENRP Tip app on a smartphone, which can be downloaded free of charge by searching "DENRP Tip" via the Google Play Store or the iTunes App Store. Wildlife violations may also be reported anonymously to Operation Game Theft by calling 800-292-3030,

going online to <http://de.gov/ogt>, or using the DENRP Tip app. Verizon customers can connect to Operation Game Theft directly by dialing #OGT.

Are you AWARE?

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police remind recreational crabbers to review state regulations governing blue crabs, including the required use of a turtle by-catch reduction device in recreational crab pots. Turtle by-catch reduction devices are available at many tackle shops where crab pots are sold.

Other Delaware crabbing regulations include:

- A Delaware recreational fishing license is required for crabbing.
- The recreational daily limit on blue crabs is one bushel per person.
- Minimum “keeper” size for male blue crabs and immature female crabs with the V-shaped apron is 5 inches, measured across the shell from point to point.
- Mature female crabs, identified by the U-shaped apron, are exempt from the minimum size of 5 inches because many females reach maturity at a smaller size.
- Mature female blue crabs bearing eggs, known as sponge crabs and recognizable by the orange eggs visible under the apron, may not be taken and must be returned to the water immediately.
- Recreational crabbers may use any number of single, baited hand lines, trot lines (a longer weighted line with a series of baited points), or pull traps. Standard size and possession limits as noted above apply.
- Recreational crabbers may not use, place, set, or tend more than two crab pots.
- Recreational crab pots must be tended by the owner at least once every 72 hours and must be marked with white buoys with the owner’s name and permanent mailing address.

- Recreational crabbers are prohibited from selling blue crabs; only commercially-licensed crabbers are permitted to offer blue crabs for sale in Delaware.
- Crabbing or fishing off courtesy docks at state-owned boat ramps is prohibited.
- To avoid being cited for littering, gather up leftover bait, bait containers, crab lines, and other trash for proper disposal. Fish & Wildlife fishing areas and wildlife areas are “carry in, carry out” for trash.

For more information on crabbing in Delaware, click on [2019 Delaware Fishing Guide](#). The guide also is available in printed form at DNREC’s Dover licensing desk, and from license agents throughout the state.

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Contact: Sgt. Brooke Mitchell, 302-382-7167, or Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police, 302-739-9913